

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 40
By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Milton H. Hamilton, Sr.

WHEREAS, it was with great sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly learned of the passing of a “giant in education,” Milton Hugh Hamilton, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton compiled an impressive record during his more than 70 years of peerless involvement in public education; and

WHEREAS, in the course of his long and distinguished career, Mr. Hamilton excelled as a teacher, truant officer, supervisor, principal, superintendent, legislator and lobbyist; and

WHEREAS, a native of the Spout Springs community of Obion County, Milton Hamilton, Sr. was a 1923 graduate of Hornbeak High School; and

WHEREAS, he began his exemplary career in education as a teacher at the former Dixie High School; he would later serve as the principal of the former Crescent School and as truant officer for Obion County; and

WHEREAS, he would also serve with distinction as the principal of the former Community Pride School for ten years, teach at the former Troy High School and fill in for the late Congressman Robert A. “Fats” Everett at the school in Cloverdale; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his bachelor’s degree from Murray State University, Mr. Hamilton served with acumen and alacrity as the principal of his alma mater, Hornbeak High School; and

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WHEREAS, in 1939, he was elected Obion County School Superintendent, a position he filled with the utmost integrity, dedication and ability until 1953; and

WHEREAS, after serving as principal of the former Dixie High School, "Milton, Sr." as he was known fondly across the state, was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1958; he retired six years later after establishing an exemplary legacy of legislative service and accomplishment; and

WHEREAS, his son, Milton Hamilton, Jr., then ran for the seat his father had so capably held, won the election, and was a valuable member of the General Assembly for nearly thirty years, only recently retiring from the Senate in 1996; and

WHEREAS, after serving capably as the supervisor of instruction for Obion County Schools during his tenure in the legislature, Milton Hamilton, Sr. became director of governmental affairs for the Tennessee Education Association in 1964; and

WHEREAS, he served admirably in this position for 17 years, and after his retirement, he continued as a valuable consultant with TEA until June 1994; and

WHEREAS, the very epitome of the dedicated professional, Mr. Hamilton served his colleagues in numerous leadership positions, including outstanding tenures as chairman of the superintendent's section of the Tennessee Education Association, president of the West Tennessee Education Association and president of TEA; he attended the White House Conference on Education during Franklin Roosevelt's administration; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton added to a full professional career the responsibilities of civic and church service; and

WHEREAS, he was both the oldest and the longest serving member of the Union City Masonic Lodge; during his years of government service he was also a member of Al Menah Shrine in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, he was a past commander of Knights Templar in Union City and past worthy Patron of Union City Order of the Eastern Star, Chapter 165; he had also been a member of Al Chymia Shrine in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton was a charter member of the Kiwanis Club of Union City and served as its first president; with his wife, Novelle Rogers Hamilton, he was a life member of the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Mr. Hamilton evinced his robust faith in the Lord by means of his 65 year membership at Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church, where he had served as Sunday School Superintendent and as an elder for many years; and

WHEREAS, he had also served the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with purpose and commitment as a member of the board at Bethel College; he had served as treasurer and business manager of the college as well; and

WHEREAS, he had been a delegate to the Church's General Assembly and twice had been elected moderator of Obion Presbyterian; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton is survived by his loving wife of over 70 years, Mrs. Novelle Rogers Hamilton, he readily credited his beloved wife as the major force behind all of his successful ventures, and their happy and stable marriage continues to serve as an inspiration to those who believe in the sanctity of matrimony and family; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Mrs. Hamilton and Senator Hamilton, he is survived by a daughter, Alice "Rena" Reid of Parsons; three grandsons, Milton H. "Mickey" Hamilton III of Franklin, David Blanton Hamilton of Union City and William Hamilton "Billy" Reid of Estill Springs; three granddaughters, Alice Ann Reid of Nashville, Terry Jo Jenkinson of Pinewood, South Carolina, and Anne Barrett Hamilton of Broomfield, Colorado; ten great-grandchildren; a sister, Ellen Callens of Estacada, Oregon; and a brother, J.D. Hamilton of Clarksville; and

WHEREAS, during a meritorious career that spanned over 70 years, Milton Hamilton, Sr. helped shape public education for present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, whether acting as a teacher, principal, superintendent or lobbyist, Mr. Hamilton always held the best interests of public education at heart, as he worked with purpose and commitment to build a brighter tomorrow for the children of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, yet this “giant of education” will also be remembered and treasured for the legacy he considered to be most important: his distinction as “a good father, a good husband and a good provider”; and

WHEREAS, although he has passed from this world to a far better existence, Milton H. Hamilton, Sr. has left behind a legacy of honorable public service and dedicated family life; men of his stature do not often walk among us, and his many accomplishments should he appropriated commemorated; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Milton H. Hamilton, Sr., reflecting warmly upon his lifelong commitment to public education and to the public good.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy and condolences to Mr. Hamilton’s family and many friends, knowing that his passing creates a void that will not be easily filled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.